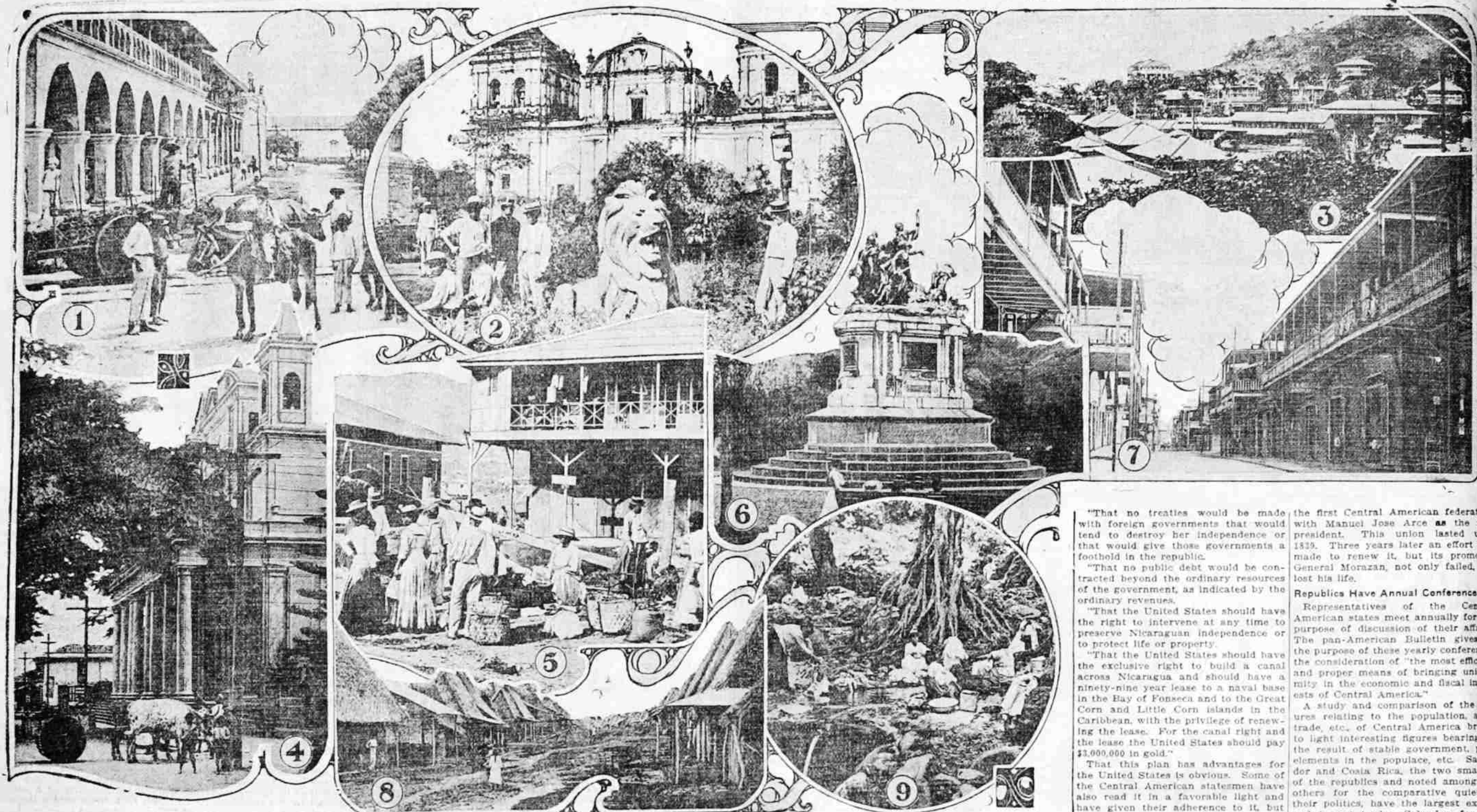


# CURRENT TOPICS IN WORD AND PICTURE

## SIX LITTLE REPUBLICS AND THEIR BIG BROTHER



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1.—In old Granada, Nicaragua. 2.—Cathedral, Leon, Nicaragua. 3.—Homes of the wealthy, Ancon Hill, Panama. 4.—Cathedral, Cartago, Costa Rica. 5.—Market, Panama. 6.—Monument in National park, San Jose, Costa Rica. 7.—Street in Colon. 8.—Village in Panama. 9.—Central American women washing clothes.

By CHARLES N. LURIE.

**H**AVING dug the Panama canal, "uniting the nations by severing the continents," the United States of America is casting about for means of protecting its precious possession. The Panama canal zone is American by cession from the republic of Panama. Ten miles of former Central American territory, on each side of the transoceanic waterway, are as much American as is Capitol Hill in the city of Washington. But to the east and west of the zone are foreign lands. It is to insure friendliness on their part toward the canal, protecting it at least from peril at their hands, that Secretary of State

Bryan announced his plan of a protectorate over Nicaragua and, by extension, over the rest of the republics of Central America.

To all contemporary seeming there is nothing to fear from these countries, not alone because of their weakness as compared to the United States, but also because of their present amicable dispositions and intentions toward their big northern brother and neighbor.

Central American history has not been lacking in presidents and generals, who have openly asserted their confidence in their ability to whip the whole United States. To their over-heated Castilian-Indian imaginations, the repulse of any armed force the United States could send to Central America

STATISTICS OF CENTRAL AMERICA.					
Country.	Area, Sq. miles.	Population.	Foreign Trade.	Capital.	
Nicaragua	51,909	660,000	\$2,825,971	Managua	
Guatemala	43,424	2,096,000	14,786,537	Guatemala	
Honduras	42,584	525,500	12,230,000	Tegucigalpa	
Salvador	7,225	1,200,000	12,586,135	San Salvador	
Costa Rica	18,087	379,133	16,398,066	San Jose	
Panama	31,350	400,000	12,722,051	Panama	

would be an easy task quickly ended. They have even gone to the length of picturing to themselves New York, Boston, Philadelphia and other seaboard American cities prostrate at the feet of some valiant Central American Bombastes Furioso. Great is the power of some Latin-American imaginations when thoroughly aroused!

Naturally, since the United States disposed of Spain so quickly in the little war of fifteen years ago there has been less of such talk. The guns of Manila and Santiago found echoes in the capitals of Central America. There is little likelihood that any Central American rebel against his own government would have the hardihood

to invade the canal territory. But it is to prevent any such possibility, to safeguard the canal thoroughly, to establish and create permanently stable conditions in the lands that lie between Mexico on the north and South America on the south, that the Bryan plan has been broached.

In its essentials the plan as broached to Nicaragua and intended for consideration by the other five Central American republics, is simple.

**Provisions of Bryan Plan.**

It contemplates the following provisions:

"That war should not be declared without the consent of the United States.

"That no treaties would be made with foreign governments that would tend to destroy her independence or that would give those governments a foothold in the republic.

"That no public debt would be contracted beyond the ordinary resources of the government, as indicated by the ordinary revenues.

"That the United States should have the right to intervene at any time to preserve Nicaraguan independence or to protect life or property.

"That the United States should have the exclusive right to build a canal across Nicaragua and should have a ninety-nine year lease to a naval base in the Bay of Fonseca and to the Great Corn and Little Corn islands in the Caribbean, with the privilege of renewing the lease. For the canal right and the lease the United States should pay \$1,000,000 in gold."

That this plan has advantages for the United States is obvious. Some of the Central American statesmen have also read it in a favorable light and have given their adherence to it, but their governments are shy. Nicaragua likes the plan and has assented, but Costa Rica objects, and so do Salvador and Honduras.

**Looking Out For the "Big Stick."**

The general attitude of thinking Central Americans has been that they "fear the Greeks bearing gifts." They fear that Uncle Sam, coming to them with one outstretched hand filled with the indubitable blessings of insurance of national life, freedom from foreign interference, stability of government and life and financial interests, has one hand behind his back bearing the club of coercion and loss of independence. They prefer precarious freedom, they say, to certain but dull dependence on the Americans. In other words, they object to a protectorate.

The project of uniting the countries of Central America into a union is nearly a century old. In 1821 Nicaragua, Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica formed themselves into

the first Central American federation, with Manuel Jose Arce as the first president. This union lasted until 1823. Three years later an effort was made to renew it, but its promoter, General Morazan, not only failed, but lost his life.

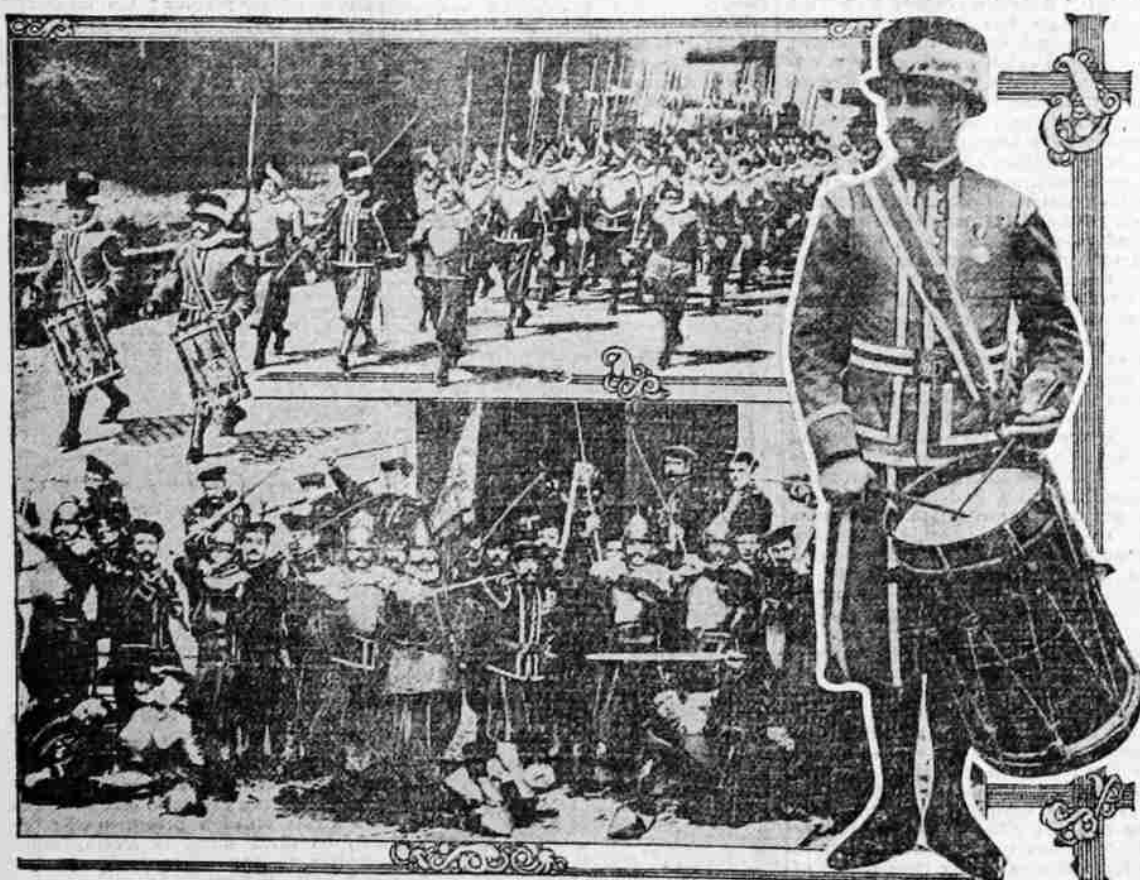
**Republics Have Annual Conference.**

Representatives of the Central American states meet annually for the purpose of discussion of their affairs. The pan-American Bulletin gives as the purpose of these yearly conferences the consideration of "the most efficient and proper means of bringing uniformity in the economic and fiscal interests of Central America."

A study and comparison of the figures relating to the population, area, trade, etc., of Central America brings to light interesting figures bearing on the result of stable government, pure elements in the populace, etc. Salvador and Costa Rica, the two smallest of the republics and noted among the others for the comparative quiet of their politics, have the largest export and import trade. Salvador, for example, is only 7,225 square miles in extent and has 1,200,000 inhabitants. Its foreign trade amounts to \$12,586,135, according to the latest figures. Nicaragua measures 51,950 square miles and has only 660,000 people, with a foreign trade of less than \$3,000,000.

Cortes, the conqueror of Mexico, was the man who added Central America to the Spanish dominions. He subjugated the country in 1524-5. Until 1821 the entire territory comprising the present five republics (without Panama) was included in the captain generalcy of Guatemala. In that year Guatemala proclaimed its independence, following the lead of the South American countries, and in 1822 the five audiences, corresponding to the present five republics (without Panama), were united to the Mexican empire of Iturbide. From that time the history of Central America is a long record of war, combined with attempts to unite into one compact republic.

## VATICAN GUARDS STRIKE AND MAY LOSE THEIR IDENTITY



POPE'S SWISS GUARDS.

**J**UST how far the tide of modern discontent with labor conditions has risen may be gauged from consideration of the fact that the bodyguard of his holiness the pope, domiciled in the Vatican, deemed it necessary to go on strike when its members sought redress of their grievances. Surely if any body of men on earth might be expected to seek relief in moderate, conservative ways, it should be the Swiss guard, with its 400 years of traditions of faithful service! When a body has reached that venerable age it may be expected

to proceed on quieter lines than the strike and the walkout. But the members of the guard thought differently. The result may be the disbandment of the guard and the consequent disappearance of one of the most picturesque military bodies on earth. Probably only in the English "beefeaters" who guard the Tower of London, may its equal in point of antiquity be found. The "beefeaters" date from about the same period as the Swiss guard—that is, from the early years of the sixteenth century. Each body is, therefore, 400 years old. But

pension. They must be at least five feet eight inches in height, must be unmarried and in good health and free from bodily disfigurements. Among certain families in the two Swiss cantons service in the guards has become a hereditary honor, handed down from father to son through generations. The service is not arduous and offers opportunities for study in Rome to the ambitious man.

The Swiss guard should not be confused with the four other bodies of men on duty in the Vatican. Highest of the five is the Noble guard, which is composed exclusively of Italian noblemen, members of families devoted to the service of the Holy See. The Noble guard has also its grievance against the officials of the pope's household for the throwing open of its ranks to Roman Catholic noblemen of nationalities other than Italian has been ordered.

In view of the troubles with the guard it is likely that radical changes will be made in the organization and that the ranks will be thrown open to volunteers from all parts of the world. Of course when the guard is no longer distinctively Swiss it will lose its Swiss name. The name "Halberdiers" has been suggested, for the men still carry the ancient halberd, which students of history will recall resembles a broad-bladed ax set on the end of a long pole. The pole itself is terminated with a sharp point.

When the Swiss guards perform their ceremonial duties they are garbed in the picturesque sixteenth-century uniform devised by Michelangelo. It is of black, red and yellow. Formerly the men wore helmets, but these have been superseded by flat black hats with red strings. Their undress uniform, which is worn on ordinary occasions, is much simpler. It is steel blue in color and consists of wide tunic, knee breeches, dark blue stockings and buckled shoes.

The trouble in the guard came about through the attempt of the colonel to reintroduce the rigid discipline which had been permitted to lapse. He wanted the men to live up to their history and traditions as a real military body and keep themselves in good trim, although active duty has been done away with since the pope lost his temporal possessions. The men objected to the bayonet drill, the target shooting and the climbing of roofs to repel imaginary assaults on the Vatican. One kind critic of the guardsmen said the life of ease they led made them too fat for such violent exercise.

ENRICO PALAZZUOLO.

## BIG MAN IN BIG JOB IS ELLIOTT, NEW HEAD OF THE NEW HAVEN

**I**F Daniel Webster was "a steam engine in trousers," as Sydney Smith called him, Howard Elliott, the newly elected president of the New Haven railroad system, is a locomotive in a tennis blazer.

That's because he likes railroading, and he likes tennis. About nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of the time he's a railroader, the other thousandth he's on the tennis court keeping his hand in at the game he learned to love many years ago. Not so many years ago either. The new head of one of the biggest and most interesting railroad systems of the country is only fifty-two and a half years old.

Switching to another track on Elliott, he it said that he is a member of the McAdoo school of railroad presidents, which has taken for its guiding principle the motto, "The public be pleased"—with all due consideration, of course, for the paying of interest on bonds and dividends on stock. He has departed very widely, as have most of the railroad officials of today, from the teachings of the old transportation manager who is said, rightly or wrongly, to have consigned the public to the regions where the stokers do not fire locomotive engines.

How elevation to high office sometimes changes a man! There's Elliott for instance. Five years ago a newspaper man, who evidently had close and intimate acquaintance with the then president of the Northern Pacific—which job Elliott is leaving to take the throttle on the New Haven—said of him:

"Howard Elliott would rather see the undertaker coming than a reporter. He is not given to kidding reporters downstairs, which he could do unless the reporter happened to be a retired pug; neither is he prone to disgorging a sesquipedalian dissertation on why things are or why things are not. He usually prefers not to talk—in fact, he always prefers not to talk."

Wouldn't think, would you, that that was the same man of whom it is now written as follows:

"The latch of my office is always out to newspaper men. I am a sort of public official, and the people have a right to know what I am doing and thinking about. The only way they have of finding out the truth is through the newspapers. I have no more right

to deny an interview to a reporter than I have to one of the members of my board of directors," says Elliott.

Now for the biographical details with which every personally conducted

roadman with the engineering corps of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy in 1880, and he was continuously in the service of that system until 1903, rising by degrees to the position of second



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HOWARD ELLIOTT.

newspaper biographical article must wind up:

Mr. Elliott was born Dec. 6, 1860, in New York city. He studied at the Cambridge (Mass.) high school and at the Lawrence Scientific school, Harvard, receiving the degree of civil engineer. His railroad service began as vice president. In 1903 Charles S. Mel-len, having left the presidency of the Northern Pacific to take charge of the New York, New Haven & Hartford. Mr. Elliott was selected to succeed him. Now he follows again in Mr. Mel-len's footsteps. He is married and has two daughters and a son.